

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 DLOS-09 OES-07 SSO-00

INRE-00 NSCE-00 L-03 EB-07 PRS-01 /096 W

-----311502Z 005692 /50

O 311430Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4422

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR IMMEDIATE

EUCOM IMMEDIATE

SECDEF IMMEDIATE

USDOCOSOUTH IMMEDIATE

COMSIXTHFLT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0709

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, ENRG, TS, LY

SUBJ: CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE: LBIYAN DEMARCHE RE J.W. BATES

REF: TRIPOLI 0704 (DTG 301325Z MAY 77)

1. ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY HUSNI SHABAN CALLED ME TO
FONOFF AT 1400 MAY 31 TO MAKE FURTHER DEMARCHE ON CONTINENTAL
SHELF DISPUTE. APOLOGIZING FOR THE SHORT NOTICE, SHABAN
SAID LIBYAN GOVERNMENT UNDERSTOOD US WAS EXERTING PRESSURE
ON J.W. BATES TO LEAVE AREA. HE URGED THAT US GOVERNMENT
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NOT INTERFERE IN THIS MATTER BETWEEN TWO BROTHER ARAB
STATES. HE CLAIMED CONTACTS WITH TUNISIANS WERE GOING
FORWARD AND THAT PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE. IN FACT,
LIBYAN AMB IN TUNIS WAS TO SEE BOURGUIBA TODAY OR
TOMORROW. LIBYA PLANNED TO BE REASONABLE AND INDEED
IF EVENTUAL ARBITRATION AWARDED AREA TO TUNISIANS,
LIBYA WOULD GRACEFULLY WITHDRAW.

2. REFERRING TO COLOR SCHEME MAP, HE CLAIMED J.W. BATES WAS AT LEAST FIVE MILES EAST OF FURTHEST AND MOST EXAGGERATED TUNISIAN CLAIM. SPECIFICALLY, BATES IS ANCHORED 120 KILOMETERS DUE NORTH OF ZAWIA. BRIEFLY HE REFERRED TO BERGSTROM'S CONVERSATION OF YESTERDAY WITH UNDER SECRETARY ATRASH AND WISHED TO REITERATE IMPORTANCE OF ALLOWING THE TWO COUNTRIES TO SETTLE THEIR OWN DIFFERENCES.

3. I EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS GENERAL US POLICY TO DISCOURAGE AMERICAN COMPANIES FROM DRILLING IN DISPUTED REGIONS AND, IN FACT, WE HAD APPLIED THIS PRINCIPLE TO A COMPANY INTERESTED IN DRILLING FOR THE TUNISIANS IN THE GENERAL REGION. BY SAME PRINCIPLE WE HAD ALSO ATTEMPTED TO DISSUADE THE BATES FROM ENTERING AREA BUT HAVE NO LEGAL MEANS OF PREVENTING PRIVATE COMPANIES FROM CONDUCTING SUCH OPERATION.

4. SHABAN SAID THAT IF BATES WERE WITHDRAWN IT WOULD GREATLY COMPLICATE MATTERS AND URGED ME TO SO INFORM MY GOVERNMENT WHICH I AGREED TO DO. HE WOULD NOT BE DRAWN OUT ON WHAT "COMPLICATE" MEANT. IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE LIBYANS MIGHT HAVE IN MIND REPEATING TACTICS USED AGAINST ITALIANS, I.E., THREATENING TO HARASS OTHER US COMPANIES OPERATING IN LIBYA.
CARLE

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